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TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Commission on Enterprise, Business
Facilitation and Development
Geneva, 20 January 1997
Agenda item 4

SERVICES INFRASTRUCTURE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE EFFICIENCY

Agreed conclusions *

1. The Commission takes note of the secretariat documents entitled "Services infrastructure for development and trade efficiency assessment"(TD/B/COM.3/3) and "Trade efficiency assessment"(TD/B/COM.3/3/Add.1) and of the proposed priorities contained therein for a programme of work in the six sectors and three cross-sectoral areas described.

2. The Commission considers that, in a globalizing and liberalizing economy, the competitiveness of traders - and particularly of small and medium-sized enterprises - increasingly relies upon access to information and information technologies and on the availability of simplified, compatible procedures and practices. This represents a particularly important challenge for developing countries, especially the least developed countries, and countries in transition. In this context, UNCTAD should develop its strategic approach to and enhance its analytical capacity for trade efficiency, building upon the practical and action-oriented work which it has been producing in this area. It further considers that the trade competitiveness of smaller firms in these countries is of central importance to their more active participation in international trade.

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* As agreed at its 5th plenary meeting, on Friday, 24 January 1997.

3. In this regard, the Commission recognizes the importance of continuing the work called for by "A Partnership for Growth and Development" (UNCTAD IX, Midrand, May 1996) (TD/378), building upon the Columbus Ministerial Declaration (Columbus, October 1994) (TD/SYMP.TE/6), in the area of services infrastructure for development and trade efficiency.

4. The Commission takes note of the cooperation which has been prevailing between UNCTAD, ITC, UNECE and ITU, and stresses the importance of pursuing and deepening such cooperation with these and other relevant bodies, including all UN regional commissions and WTO, in the field of service infrastructure for development and trade efficiency; it requests the UNCTAD secretariat to provide a report on the extent of this cooperation.

5. The Commission considers that the work of the UNCTAD secretariat in the areas identified under item 4 of the agenda of its first session (namely customs, transport, banking and insurance, business practices/trade facilitation, business information, telecommunications; transit, human resources development, legal issues) should be pursued in an integrated fashion, so as to maximize the synergies and economies of scale which may be identified between these areas. In each of these areas, the secretariat should focus on a limited number of priorities.

6. The Commission takes note of the expansion of the Trade Point programme and the interest of member countries in participating. The Commission requests the secretariat to solicit contributions for this purpose. It requests the secretariat to provide as early as possible an evaluation of the Trade Point programme - including the extent of the inter-operability of Trade Points - parts of which should constitute an input to the preparation of the expert meeting on telecommunications, business facilitation and trade efficiency (see para.8 below).

7. The Commission requests the secretariat to produce an information note on the basis of a cost - and benefit - analysis of practical ways and means to ensure the legal protection of the Trade Point and Global Trade Point Network names and logos.

8. The Commission convenes two expert meetings on the following items and at the following dates:

(i) Use of information technologies to make transit arrangements more effective: 7-9 April 1997; transit and transport facilitation issues should be considered from a technical point of view, in the broad context of trade and development, with special focus on the specific problems of land-locked and access-granting countries;

(ii) Telecommunications, business facilitation and trade efficiency: 15-17 September 1997; the focus of the meeting should be to assess the practical trade and development implications of the Global Information Infrastructure (GII), including its applications for the Global Trade Point Network (GTPNet).

9. The Commission considers that the secretariat should pursue its work on the strategic, analytical and methodological bases on which a trade efficiency assessment exercise could be organized. It requests the secretariat to produce an interim report on this issue in time for consideration by the Commission at its second session.

10. The Commission decides to consider at its second session the contribution that infrastructure services can make to the informal sector and the development of micro-enterprises.

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Commission on Enterprise, Business
Facilitation and Development
Geneva, 20 January 1997

21 January 1997

ENGLISH/FRENCH/SPANISH

PROVISIONAL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

This list is based on communications received to date. The format and data of the entries in this list are as provided to the secretariat. A final list of participants will be issued in due course and, to facilitate this, delegations are requested to give corrections or additions in writing to the secretariat in the conference room or in room E.3057.

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La présente liste a été établie d'après les communications reçues à ce jour. La présentation et le contenu des renseignements sont reproduits tels qu'ils ont été communiqués au secrétariat. Une liste finale des participants sera publiée en temps opportun; à cette fin, les délégations sont priées de communiquer toute correction ou addition par écrit au secrétariat, soit dans la salle de réunion, soit au bureau E.3057.

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Esta lista está basada en las comunicaciones recibidas hasta la fecha. La forma y los datos de las inserciones en la lista son los facilitados a la secretaría. Oportunamente se distribuirá una lista definitiva de participantes y para poder hacerlo con mayor facilidad se ruega a las delegaciones que proporcionen a la secretaría sus correcciones o adiciones por escrito en la sala de conferencias o en el despacho E.3057.

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Mr. Sebastian PAUST, First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

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Mr. Syargei MIKHNEVICH, Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva

BRESIL

Ms. Ana Lucy GENTIL CABRAL, Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Ms. Renata SANCHES, Coordinator, Trade Efficiency Promotion Center, Minister of External Relations, Trade Promotion Department

CAMEROUN

H.E. M. François-Xavier NGOUBEYOU, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Geneva
Mr. Charles Chebo TANTOH, First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

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Mr. LU Ruishu, Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mme LIN Xuan, Official, Department of International Trade and Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation
Mr. ZHANG Shaogang, Third Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

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Sra. Amalia GUZMAN MARTINEZ-VALLS, Consejero (Asuntos Comerciales Agrícolas), Misión Permanente, Ginebra

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Mr. I. KOCHEVOI, First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

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Mr. Michiyuki NISHIOKA, First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr. Katsuki MARUYAMA, Researcher, Developing Economies Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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